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VIA ECFS

March 5, 2014

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554
Attn: Wireline Competition Bureau

**Re: WC Docket No. 10-90
Rural Broadband Experiment Expression of Interest – Rate-of-Return Areas
Ellerbe Telephone Company**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Ellerbe Telephone Company (Ellerbe) hereby expresses interest in participating in the Commission's rural broadband experiments to provide robust, scalable high-speed broadband to unserved high-cost areas with additional Connect America funding.¹ Ellerbe Telephone Company is a rate-of-return incumbent local exchange carrier serving rural areas of North Carolina, and proposes deployment as follows.

Proposed Service Area

Ellerbe proposes to build out broadband to 130 unserved premises within the regulated service territory.

Proposed Broadband Service

Voice and broadband services with broadband transmission speeds of 10 Mbps downstream and 2 Mbps upstream provided over copper/fiber DSL technology.

Funding

Ellerbe estimates construction costs to be a total of \$1,700,000.00. Ellerbe requests \$1,600,000.00 in funding from Connect America Funds in a one-time funding grant. Ellerbe will fund the remaining capital and ongoing expenses to operate the system through customer revenue.

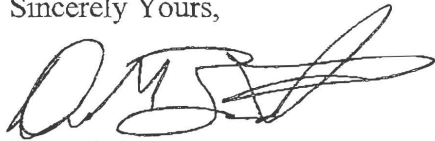
Ellerbe has been providing telephone service to this area since 1918. We are an integral part of the community and have been dedicated to providing our customers with the best of all possible service. Ellerbe is familiar with government grant/loan programs as we are a Rural Utilities

¹ See *Technology Transitions et al.*, GN Docket No. 13-5 et al., Order, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Report and Order, Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Proposal for Ongoing Data Initiative, FCC 14-5 (rel. Jan. 31, 2014).

Service (RUS) loan recipient in the past and are still have active loans in the rural telecommunication programs. This funding will allow us to be able to provide these customers with the same amount of broadband that other customers in our area can receive and give these customers in the high-cost hard to reach areas access to their community anchor institutions. Ellerbe expects service to be offered to all unserved customers within nine (9) months after construction starts.

Ellerbe appreciates the opportunity to provide this non-binding expression of interest. Please contact the undersigned with any questions.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DMB', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Dan M. Bennett

President

Ellerbe Telephone Company